

South Dakota AFNR

Academic Integration Activities

→ *Agriscience students read articles about organizations that have contributed to agriculture while applying their reading knowledge involving analyzing historical, geographical, and cultural texts.*

1. Ag Standard

Agriscience—AS 1.1

Appraise the fundamentals of the agriculture industry and its impact in the world.

- > Investigate the development of today's agriculture industry as related to the development of technology.
- > Analyze the influence and impact of agriculture on the development of nations around the world.
- > Examine the history of organizations that have made a significant contribution to agriculture.

2. Academic Standard

11. R. 4.1

Students can analyze a text within cultural, geographical, and historical context.

- > Recognize the connection between the written work and the circumstances that produced it.

3. Background Information

The over-riding goal of analyzing writing is to demonstrate some new understanding of the text.

How to Analyze Text

- a. Read or reread the text with specific questions in mind.
- b. Organize basic ideas, events, and names.
- c. Think through your personal reaction to the writing.
- d. Identify and consider the most important ideas.
- e. Return to the text to locate specific evidence and passages related to the major ideas.
- f. Identify a thesis or topic sentence indicating a basic observation or assertion about the text.
- g. Discuss what happens in the passage and why it is significant to the work as a whole.
- h. Consider what is said – particularly the ideas that are expressed.
- i. Assess how it is said, considering how the word choice, ordering of ideas, sentence structure, etc. contribute to the meaning of the passage.

4. Example in Context

Consider these questions:

- a. What thoughts/feelings does the author have regarding the article's topic?
- b. What comparisons does the author make and why?
- c. What organization does this article credit for having a contribution to agriculture, and why is it believed to be significant?

Mike Rowe from “Dirty Jobs” reflects on his experience at the 2009 National FFA Convention.

“For those of you who don't know, The FFA is an organization of 500,000 teenagers, most of who look like they fell off the front of a Wheaties box. Wholesome, polite, and impossibly well mannered, these are the kids you wish you had, diligently pursuing an adolescence of agricultural acumen. Unfortunately, I arrived at their annual convention with the same level of planning and forethought I brought on my last visit, (i.e., none,) and found myself pacing in the wings twenty minutes before my appearance, trying to arrange my thoughts into an ‘inspirational and G-Rated

Answer:

Reading Standard

- a. *Mike Rowe views the National FFA Organization and the many members of the group in a very positive and supportive light. His word choice and voice in this article are pleasant and intriguing.*
- b. *FFA members are compared to those on the front of a Wheaties box. He writes: “...polite, impossibly well mannered, these are the kids you wish you had, diligently pursuing an adolescence of agricultural acumen...” He probably decided to compare those types of kids because of the positive qualities he sees them both having.*

Ag Standard

- c. *National FFA Organization is credited because it is a very large student organization that has hardworking and responsible adolescents that are excited about the world of agriculture. He indicates there are over 500,000 diligent teenagers in the organization.*

5. Guided Practice Exercises

Consider these questions:

- a. What cultural issues are brought up in this portion of the document?
- b. How is today's agricultural industry impacted by the development of technology?

“The FFA currently faces an image and perception problem. The previous name of the organization, ‘Future Farmers of America,’ lends itself to stereotyping by the public. The FFA faces a continuing battle to redefine itself against narrow perceptions of ‘agriculture,’ ‘vocational’ and ‘farmers.’ The name ‘FFA’ is now used instead of ‘Future Farmers of America.’ Incredible. Have we really become so disconnected from our food that farmers no longer wish to be called farmers? Apparently, yes. The FFA has determined that most Americans think of farmers like those actors in Colonial Williamsburg – smiling caricatures from Hee Haw and Green Acres, laboring quaintly in flannel and denim. From what I've seen, they're right. Over and over I hear the same thing from

Answer:

Reading Standard

- a. *Cultural barriers create misperceptions and stereotypes of farmers. Farmers have a historical image that is often hard to overcome in this age. The author, Mike Rowe, indicates that the FFA Organization believes that many Americans view farmers in an old-fashioned manner because they are disconnected.*

Ag Standard

- b. *Technology has modernized the farmer. Efficiency has been improved greatly because of technology, meaning technology has played a large role in the Ag industry. He writes, "Technical advances in modern agriculture now rival those of Silicon Valley, and today's farms are more efficient than ever, but no one seems to have gotten the memo. No one seems to care."*

6. Independent Practice Exercises

Consider these questions:

- a. Who is the author's intended audience?
- b. What is the purpose for writing this article?
- c. What does this article indicate about agriculture's impact on other nations?

"As I spoke with various farmers that evening, I realized that I had asked the wrong question. 'Why?' is too easy. Obviously, today's farmers need a PR Campaign because they are beset by an army of angry acronyms, each determined to change modern agriculture in a way that better reflects their particular worldview. The better question is 'How.' How is it that 300 million Americans – all addicted to eating – have become disconnected from the people who grow our food? What new priorities have captured our shared concern?

On Dirty Jobs, I'm no expert, and I'm even less of one here. But I have a theory, and it goes like this – all jobs rely on one of two industries – mining and agriculture. Every tangible thing our

Answer:

Reading Standard

- a. *The uninformed and agriculturists are the intended audience.*
- b. *The goal of the article was to educate those who are disconnected from our food source and inspire agriculturists by offering support.*

Ag Standard

- c. *Civilization begins with miners and farmers. Agricultural has had an impact on our world by being the source of many things.*

Consider these questions:

- a. What do you think was the author's intention when he produced this written document?
- b. What organization does this article credit for having a contribution to agriculture and why is it believed to be significant?

"Could this be the root cause of the FFA's 'perception problem?' Could our warped view of the modern farmer be just another symptom of our warped relationship with work in general? It's just a theory, but how else can we explain a country that marginalizes and stereotypes the very people we depend on most? From what I've seen, most people like farmers. Most people like food. The problem is Work. We've spent decades trying to distance ourselves from traditional notions of Work. And who embodies Work more than The American Farmer?

There is something to be said for occasionally finding yourself in the company of like-minded people. And every so often, if you can get your thoughts organized in time, it's fun to address the

Answer:

Reading Standard

- a. *Mike Rowe wants to share his passion about agriculture and work. He wants to share the insight he gained from attending the National FFA Convention.*

Ag Standard

- b. *National FFA Organization is credited because it has attempted to diffuse the negative stereotypes placed on farmers.*

7. Notes

A variety of written work could be used to facilitate a lesson about agriculture's impact on the world and analyze articles within a certain context. Similar activities could be done with news articles, magazine stories, historical documents, FFA handbook writings, etc. Worksheets could be developed that use many different sources instead of small divisions of one long article (such as the example shown here).